

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 23, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
United States Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus,

As new members of the United States Senate, we are deeply invested in the health care debate and agree that passing sensible reform is essential and cannot wait. There is no doubt about the importance of this issue and we recognize that the opportunity to truly reform our system is a unique one. We applaud you and Senator Grassley for your continued work and dedication toward a bipartisan effort.

We all believe that increasing coverage, improving quality of care, and reining in annual health care cost increases are vital goals. In the face of exploding debt and deficits, however, we are concerned that too little focus has been given to the need for cost containment. The fact is that the current situation is unsustainable in the long term. With 17% of our GDP currently being used to pay for health care services, we must get health care costs under control so we can compete and lead in the global marketplace. We believe that any final bill must include innovation, hard decisions, and incentives to bend the cost curve.

We hear daily from our constituents about this issue; many of them are concerned that we are not doing enough to control costs. We strongly urge the Senate Finance Committee to continue to remain centered on realigning incentives to stabilize health care costs. We stand ready to serve and to help you and the Senate Finance Committee to craft a bill that bends the health care cost curve, provides affordable coverage, and rewards value-added services. Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,



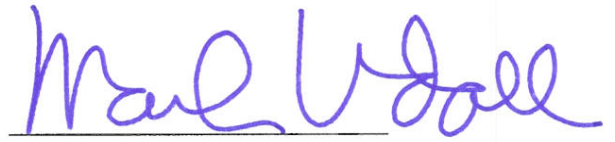
Mark R. Warner



Michael F. Bennet



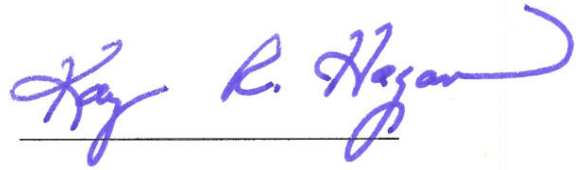
Mark Begich



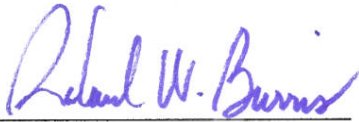
Mark Udall



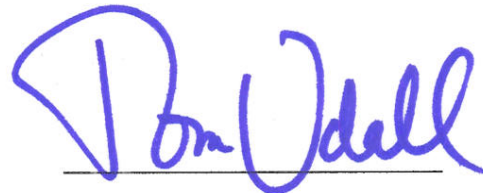
Jeanne Shaheen



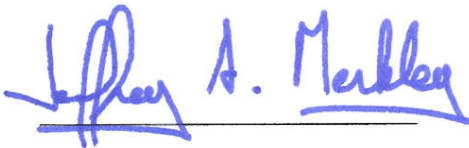
Kay R. Hagan



Roland W. Burris



Tom Udall



Jeff Merkley